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The Chicago Chronicle (Chicago, Illinois) · Sun, Sep 20, 1896 · Page 37
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POLO BECOMING POPULAR.

Chicago Horsemen Have Taken to the Sport With Ardor.

Much Excitement and Some Hazard Attendant Upon the Play.

Horses Must Be Specially Trained or Success Is Hardly Possible.

Devotees of the Sport in Chicago Preparing for Coming Contests.

Is polo to become the popular national sport? It looks as though the affirmative to this was conclusive. Then may Chicago and its far-famed polo team arise and say: "We've started and continued the enthusiasm through the past months, so the laurels for the west are for us." Just now the one astonishing topic at polo headquarters in Washington park and at the various lunches and dinners where lovers of the game assemble is the play against the Buffalo team next Saturday in the last-named city. Captain W. Vernon Booth of the Chicago four has selected a group that, with his assistance, may be sure of victory. They are H.G.Strong, the poet laureate of the quarte:; Walter Farewell and G. A. H. Scott. The treasured championship cup that was brought home last year, leaving the Buffalos in tears and wrath, is to be retained another season if what the Chicago men say is true, but they must work hard, for the lovely city on Erie's edge has determination in her eye. Captain Booth will ride Hobo in this game and has as much faith in this pony as in his own clever stroke. Hobo may be called the pet of the Washington park grounds, an all round favorite, and a deep thinker on the intricacies of the game. He is black, well shaped, the ideal number of pounds, and would rather play polo than ramble along the western green doing nothing but learning a new hind kick. Henry Gordon Strong, otherwise known as one of the boys, has written an interesting sketch in verse, which has immortalized him to literary fame, and in it he has given the Booth pony his motto for the coming trial:

Now, Hobo, take a mighty brace,
You're running now your greatest race;
Think of your Oklahoma days,
Think of the future's grateful praise,
Think of the mare that gave you birth,
Think of your noble sire's worth,
Think of any old thing at all,
So hump yourself and get that ball.

GOOD POLO PONIES.

But there are others that Hobo considers in his set, and among his chosen friends are McGinty, belonging to J. C. Greene, and Castaway, the pride of W. W. Rathborne. The latter also owns White Wolf, an expert chaser after the ball, which is an unusually small, but admirably formed, little fellow. But Mr. Rathborne is a weighty man, physically as well as intellectually, and to see him on White Wolf in mad pursuit of the ever-elusive ball is one of the interesting sights during game day on the polo grounds. Mr. Rathborne is president of the Chicago club, and is therefore permitted more than ordinary leeway.

THE GAME IN CHICAGO.

James Carey Evans of this city is the originator of polo in Chicago, which throws about him a long, lasting halo, for from this city has love for the game spread away to

EDWARD DOAN.

the Pacific coast. He was the first captain, Walter Keith the second, Mr. Booth the third. The game seems to be making a mad sweep over the country, if one may guess by the number of new clubs constantly forming. It is not mild child's play, for it furnishes the same requisite amount of danger as the always fascinating football. While the grounds at Newport are kept in splendid condition and are looked at with envy by many of the old world's best poloists, they are in dirt finish, and therefore bound to come second to those in Washington park. The latter are always in such an admirable state of perfection that English experts say there is no finer polo ground in the world than this. In point of picturesqueness "classic" Evanston has the lead. The grounds are framed in a row of trees and, with the dash of color given by the riders' costumes, make a particularly happy ensemble. To Marshall M. Kirkman and his three sons belong the honor of teaching the beauties of the game to this pretty suburb. But Mr. Kirkman does all things thoroughly, whether running a railroad or a polo team. It was suggested that he write a book on the science of polo, in which he is much interested, for it would be quite as readable as his well-known volumes on "The Science of Railways." It is not unlikely he will take up such a work this fall.

NOT A GAMBLING GAME.

What seemingly endears polo to gentlemen is that it is not a gambling game, and the possible dangers of the sport are encountered for honor's sake, rather a refreshing suggestion in these days, when many are inclined to confuse the idea of sportsman and sporting man as one and the same thing. A great deal of interest is evidenced in the new breed of polo ponies in southern California, which are finding a ready sale in England, where the game is the leading sport. Mr. Kirkman offers the assertion that in fifteen years there will be 1,000 clubs in this country. As to whether women may play or not is the next question for poloists to decide. Again Mr. Kirkman declares that they may—but, not in the present style of costume nor on side saddles, but in corduroy bloomers, long boots, etc. The question of dress—it will take several seasons for Mme. Grundy to settle this. Miss Kirkman of Evanston and Miss Hanna of Cleveland, daughter of the honorable Mark, are among the expert horsewomen of the west, and they might tell the public it is a possible game for them now.

Apropos of the subject a short description of the first woman's game ever played will offer some pros and cons. The affair took place in the English colony in India. Each woman had a male attendant, who was to look out for her special safety. The game continued for two minutes after the first call, when a halt came to remove a troublesome veil; three minutes, a second halt to remove a pair of gloves for Mrs. B. to help Mrs. C. put a pair on; one lost a valuable handkerchief, which must be found; several more exciting experiences, then all hands went for a chat and a cup of tea.

A COMING EVENT.

There is shortly to be great joy among the Chicago poloists, for Walter Keith leaves soon for Baltimore, where he will wed a charming daughter of that city and bring her a welcome bride to Chicago. The boys are hoping that Mrs. Walter won't interfere with her husband's love for the game.

At the last Evanston game were a trio of girls, and amidst their various exclamations was heard: "Oh, Marie, isn't it lovely—just like the tilting tournaments of the olden times; it just fascinates me."

Unlike the many rings under the present circus tent, you may easily watch each player. You select your pet rider, follow him with excited enthusiasm, promptly scorning any wild hits, knowing that accuracy and direction are far more important than mere strength, and almost lose

J. L. GREENE ON M'GINTY.

your breath at the various narrow escapes. No sport for dudes—rough riding, wild contentions for the driving of the ball, thrilling display of horsemanship, bravery, quickness of thought and tact, all fleeting before the vision like so many kaleidoscopic views.

W. W. RATHBORNE ON CASTAWAY.

No cruelty to the ponies; they enjoy it all, knowing they are two-thirds the game. Mr. Booth says that Carmencita, one of his pet ponies, the moment she sees the ball becomes wild with joy, and explains it with remarkable suggestions of her hind heels, which has led to her appropriate name.

TEXAS PONIES.

A car load of ponies brought from Texas by Mr. Kirkman not long since in a wild state showed the rascals in their native deviltry. Their first few weeks were spent in proving their kinship with his satanic majesty, and in a variety of atmospheric tracings with all fours. Many of them under the trainer's hand have become the most docile fellows in the world, and follow the ball about like a kitten.

It is an expensive game, so are all amusements. A good pony is worth $100. One at $50 is usable, while $300 or $400 buys a beauty. It costs $350 for keeping, and a nice little sum is represented.

CHICAGO'S CLUB.

The Chicago club was only formed in 1893, and is undoubtedly the strongest organization in the country, for its age. These are glorious days for polo, and shortly after the Buffalo game will come one with St. Louis, which has a very strong team. One hears discussions on polo everywhere at each social function, and if the ladies can't play they are the most enthusiastic audience possible, and add to all the games with their gay costumes and interest. It is teaching the men that consideration and tact are among the first requirements of the game, and it is partly responsible for the charming courtesy of manner one meets with in every member of the Chicago Polo club. If it is to improve the national code of manners, as well as to prove a health-giving exercise, let there be a polo club in every city in the union.

JAMES CAREY EVANS.
[Originatr of Polo in Chicago.]

CAPTAIN VERNON W. BOOTH ON HOBO.

LONDON'S GREAT CONFLAGRATION.

Famous Inscription Commemorating the Event Recently Discovered.

[From Spare Moments.]

On Aug. 20, 1876, was discovered in Pudding lane, where the great fire of London commenced, the stone which bore the original English inscription that was placed on the monument erected close by in memory of that event. This great fire covered with ruins 396 acres, extending from the Tower westward to the Temple church, and from the northeast gate to Holborn bridge, destroying St. Paul's cathedral and eighty-seven other churches, the city gates, the Royal exchange, the custom-house, Guild hall, Sion house, which was then by London wall, and many other public buildings, besides 13,200 private houses, and laying waste 400 streets. About 200,000 persons were forced to encamp in the fields of Islington and Highgate, but only eight deaths were reported as resulting from this conflagration.

The monument was erected according to the design and direction of Sir Christopher Wren between the years 1671 and 1677. The pedestal is forty feet high, and the edifice altogether 202 feet, that being the distance of its base from the spot where the fire commenced which it commemorates. The staircase inside consists of 345 steps of black marble. It is the loftiest isolated column in the world, and therefore has proved a tempting position for persons of suicidal inclinations. In consequence of these fatalities a fence was placed around the railing of the gallery in 1839. But though this monument was rightly and worthily erected to commemorate the fire, inasmuch as it led to so little loss of human life, and, moreover, to the city being rebuilt on more favorable sanitary principles, at the same time the English inscription that the dread and suspicion with which Roman Catholics were then regarded caused to be placed upon it was, all now allow, a false and groundless accusation.

There were three other inscriptions in Latin, but it was the English one, cut in 1681, that propagated this slander. The words inscribed were as follows: "This pillar was set up in perpetual remembrance of the most dreadful burning of this Protestant city, begun and carried on by ye treachery and malice of ye popish faction in the beginning of September in ye year of our lord 1666, in order to ye carrying on their horrid plot for extinguishing ye Protestant religion and old English liberty, and ye introducing popery and slavery."

The burning at the stake for their religious opinions of 277 persons in England and Wales during the reign of Mary, the repeated plots by priests and other members of the Romish church to assassinate Queen Elizabeth, which occasioned the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots; gunpowder plot, in the reign of James I., to destroy kings, lords and commons, all combined to make British Protestants dread popery; and even if they did not suspect Charles II. of being a Roman Catholic, which he was in truth, and avowed himself upon his deathbed, yet they knew that his brother, the duke of York, who would succeed him as James II., was professedly a member of that church, and therefore they had readily believed in that "popish plot," which was only a fiction of Titus Oates and others, but for which the aged Viscount Stafford was executed on Dec. 29, 1680, besides seventeen other Roman Catholics.

Naturally, this inscription was obliterated by James II., and though it was revived in the reign of William III., to assist in justifying his taking the throne of that former sovereign, his father-in-law, yet it was finally, as a falsehood, removed by order of the common council of the city of London on Jan. 26, 1831.

NO SMOKE NUISANCE IN LONDON.

Gas Using Has Rendered the Atmosphere Clear and Pure.

[From the Philadelphia Record.]

A new and unexpected agency is having a most beneficial effect in contributing to the abatement of the smoke nuisance in London. The relative clearness of the London atmosphere within the last twelve months has been plainly apparent, and the smoke cloud which obscures the London atmosphere appears to be progressively lightening. Ernest Hart, chairman of the smoke abatement exhibition in London, frequently pointed out that the greatest contributors to the smoke cloud of London were the small grates of the enormous number of houses of the poor, and a great deal of ingenuity had been exhausted with relatively little success in endeavoring to abate this nuisance. The use of gas fires was urgently recommended, but had hitherto been difficult, owing to its cost and the want of suitable apparatus. The rapid and very extensive growth of the use of gas for cooking as well as lighting purposes by the working classes, due to the introduction of the "penny in the slot" system, is working a great revolution in the London atmosphere. During the last four years the South London Gas Company alone has fixed 50,000 slot meters, and nearly 38,000 small gas cooking stoves in the houses of the working man. The movement is still making great progress, and we hope means may be found to extend it to the houses of the more comfortable classes. The enormous improvement in the London atmosphere and the clearing away of a smoke pall which hangs over London may then be anticipated. Great progress has already been made and still may be hoped in the clearing of the London air.

A Bicycle Not Luggage.

English cyclists will note with interest—also with regret—that the judge of the Newbury county court has decided that a bicycle cannot be treated as passenger's luggage.

Polo Becoming Popular

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